



Water Quality NewsFlash

Published by California Department of Transportation, Division of Environmental Analysis, Office of Water Quality

January 3, 2005

Number 05-01

Ballona Creek Beneficial Uses – State Board to review LA Board rejection –

One of the beneficial uses designated for Ballona Creek is water-contact recreation - *REC-1*. This designation includes very stringent water quality objectives for bacteria which are often exceeded by stormwater runoff. Los Angeles Regional Board staff determined that this beneficial use designation was inappropriate for the upper reaches of Ballona Creek. One creek section is concrete lined with 20-foot high, vertical concrete creek walls, and generally limited access. The other section under consideration is also concrete lined but may have some access.

The LA Regional Board staff prepared a *Use Attainability Analysis* as required by the Clean Water Act to support a change in beneficial use designation. The UAA concluded that recreational use was never attained and is not fully feasible in these segments of the river. The LA Board staff recommended removal of the REC-1 designation for one upper segment and modification of another segment to "Limited REC-1." Both actions mean that less stringent bacteria standards would apply. The proposal was intended to bring the designated uses more in line with actual or feasible uses. The changes would also ease the compliance burden for stormwater runoff. This action could potentially save the costs of providing disinfection to wet weather discharges to these waterways.

The LA Regional Board considered the proposed changes but rejected them at the June 5, 2003, meeting. LA County and the Flood Control District then petitioned the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to review the LA Board's failure to adopt the staff proposal. The petitioners concern was that the beneficial use designations are critical given that a TMDL for bacterial contamination will be developed for Ballona Creek. The State Board will consider the issue at the January 4 workshop. The draft order prepared by SWRCB staff "concludes that the Regional Board erred" and reverses the LA Board's decision.

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/agendas/2005/january/0104-15.doc>

Upcoming meetings and conferences

Santa Monica Bay – 2005 State of the Bay Conference – sponsored by Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission; January 13, LA; includes session on stormwater management; more information: <http://kiefner7.usc.edu/uploads/library/texts/CONFERENCE%20AGENDA%20WEB.pdf>

Areas of Special Biological Significance – Stakeholder meeting – January 13; sponsored by SWRCB; Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla; *Agenda:* information regarding applications for exceptions, funding, etc.; <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plnspols/oplans/asbs.html>

California Stormwater Quality Association – Meeting - Oakland, Jan. 14, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.; fee: \$50, non-members (includes lunch) payable at the door or online. This is the annual "State of California Stormwater" meeting with updates from the SWRCB Executive Director and USEPA Region IX Water Division Chief <http://www.casqa.org/>

Pollution Prevention and Stormwater Conference - 32nd Annual - Monterey, CA, Feb. 28 - March 2, 2005; Register online: http://www.cwea.org/et_attendees_conferences.shtml

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, fkrieger@msn.com with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>